

DAY 18 TUESDAY

HEBREWS 7:4-10 MOVE ON UP!

⁴ Just think how great he was: Even the patriarch Abraham gave him a tenth of the plunder! ⁵ Now the law requires the descendants of Levi who become priests to collect a tenth from the people—that is, their brothers—even though their brothers are descended from Abraham. ⁶ This man, however, did not trace his descent from Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him who had the promises. ⁷ And without doubt the lesser person is blessed by the greater. ⁸ In the one case, the tenth is collected by men who die; but in the other case, by him who is declared to be living. ⁹ One might even say that Levi, who collects the tenth, paid the tenth through Abraham, ¹⁰ because when Melchizedek met Abraham, Levi was still in the body of his ancestor.

The puzzle that is Melchizedek continues to be presented by our author. He is greater than Abraham – how can that be? And he is even greater than the Levites, those whose inheritance was God alone – by God’s declaration (Joshua 13:14)? Yet, by his interaction with Abraham as it is recorded in Genesis, Melchizedek is clearly the superior.

In an ordered culture, Melchizedek represents a life and ministry, and therefore, an authority of a different order. His name and vocation would indicate that he represents a higher order of justice and justification. Other than his overall exemplary faith, Abraham is presented in Genesis as being all too on our level. Melchizedek is the king of righteousness while Abraham only had an imputed righteousness. Melchizedek is the king of peace while Abraham came before him as a victorious warrior. Melchizedek is a priest of God Most High while Abraham was a man in need of intercession. Melchizedek lives at a level we are to aspire to while Abraham showed us the first step in the process of moving up to that level.

As sinners in recovery our goal is to grow into the likeness of Christ (Romans 6:8-10; Galatians 3:27). With Abraham we can only journey toward Christ by faith. But the journey can only be completed through the work of a high priest who is himself inherently righteous, perfectly just and always intervening on our behalf. Not Melchizedek, but Jesus Christ, the source of a new life on a higher level.

Broaden my vision and deepen my hope, O Lord that I might aspire to live the life you have created me to live. May I acknowledge your perfect will for my life by submitting to your authority in all things and allowing you to grow me in righteousness and justice. Help me to acknowledge you in all that I do and with all that I have been given. Amen.